



# CITY OF SANTEE

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## Notice of Preparation of a Draft Revised Environmental Impact Report

**TO:** Agencies, Organizations, and Interested Parties

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Revised Environmental Impact Report for the Fanita Ranch Project (SCH# 2005061118)

The City of Santee (City) is the lead agency, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), in the preparation of a Draft Revised Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Fanita Ranch project. The Fanita Ranch project is considered a project under CEQA (Guidelines Section 15378), and the City has discretionary authority over the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15357).

**Agencies:** The City requests the view of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental analysis relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities and interests in connection with the proposed project. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any required permits issued by your agency or when authorizing other approvals related to the project.

**Organizations and Interested Parties:** The City requests any comments related to environmental concerns associated with this project.

**Deadline:** CEQA requires a 30-day scoping period. The public review period on the NOP is scheduled to begin on November 10, 2018 and close on December 10, 2018. Because of the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be received by this deadline. Please indicate a contact person and send your response to:

John O'Donnell, Principal Planner  
Development Services Department  
City Hall, Building 4  
10601 Magnolia Avenue  
Santee, CA 92071  
[jodonnell@cityofsantee.ca.gov](mailto:jodonnell@cityofsantee.ca.gov)  
(619) 258-4100, Ext. 182

A public scoping meeting will be held on Thursday, November 29, 2018 at City of Santee City Hall, 10601 Magnolia Avenue, Building 8 from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. All parties are welcome to attend and are encouraged to recommend environmental issues, mitigation measures, and alternatives to the project that they believe should be addressed in the Draft Revised EIR.

**Project Title:** Fanita Ranch

**Project Location:** The Fanita Ranch project site consists of approximately 2,635 acres of land located in the northern portion of the City of Santee (City) in eastern San Diego County. The City is located approximately 18 miles east of downtown San Diego and the Pacific Ocean. The proposed project lies north of State Route (SR) 52 and west of SR-67 and would be accessed from the future northerly extensions of Fanita Parkway and Cuyamaca Street via Mast Boulevard and the future extension of Magnolia Avenue to Cuyamaca Street. The project site is bordered by Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and Padre Dam Municipal Water District (PDMWD) facilities to the west including Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve; open space/recreational areas including Goodan Ranch Regional Park and Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve to the north and west; City residential neighborhoods to the south and the unincorporated residential community of Eucalyptus Hills to the east. Figure 1 provides the Regional Location Map and Figure 2 provides the Project Site Location Map.

**Project Approval History:** The Fanita Ranch project site has been subject to environmental review and land use planning for the past 40 years. Prior to the current project, the most recent application for development on the project site was filed in 2005. At that time, a Tentative Map and Development Review Permit application were submitted to build four villages containing 1,380 single-family dwelling units, 15 live-work units, commercial and mixed use space, parks, and open space. The City Council certified the Final EIR (SCH# 2005061118) and approved the project in 2007.

From 2008 through 2012, the approvals were subject to litigation. Ultimately, portions of the 2007 EIR related to biological resources and water supply, as well as a Revised EIR on the single issue of fire safety adopted by the City in 2009, were found inadequate. (See *Preserve Wild Santee, et al. v. City of Santee, et al.* (2012) 210 Cal.App.4th 260; *Preserve Wild Santee, et al. v. City of Santee, et al.*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2009-00097042-CU-TT-CTL.) In 2013, the City set aside the certification of the 2007 EIR and 2009 Revised EIR and vacated related project approvals.

In August 2018, the current owner of the property, HomeFed Fanita Rancho, LLC and JWO Land, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of HomeFed Fanita Rancho, LLC, submitted a complete application that modifies the project. This Notice of Preparation is for a revised EIR evaluating the modified project and addressing the portions of the prior environmental analysis for the project approved in 2007 that were found inadequate.

**Revised Project Description:** Fanita Ranch would be a master planned community consisting of up to 2,949 housing units with a school, or 3,008 units without a school, up to 80,000 square feet of commercial uses, parks, open space, and agriculture uses. The Santee General Plan identifies Fanita Ranch as Planned Development (PD). A General Plan Amendment would be processed concurrently with a Specific Plan to designate the Fanita Ranch project site with a Specific Plan (SP) land use designation and to ensure that the Fanita Ranch project is in compliance with the City's General Plan, as amended.

Development within the Fanita Ranch Specific Plan Area would be clustered, preserving more than 60 percent of the site as Habitat Preserve (see Figure 3, Land Use Plan). Development would be distributed into three villages named according to their design theme: Fanita Commons, Orchard Village, and Vineyard Village. Each village would be defined by its location, unique physical characteristics, and mix of housing types and uses. In addition, the application identifies a Special Use Area located in the southwest corner of the site. Each of the development areas and key project components are summarized below.

### *Fanita Commons*

Fanita Commons would be located in the northwest portion of the site and would serve as the main common village for all of Fanita Ranch. It would include an active-adult neighborhood, K-8 school site, a community park, two natural drainages preserved as open space with adjoining linear parks, a working Farm, and a mixed-use village center. With the Farm as its focal point, orchards, vineyards, fields, and an event barn would serve as defining elements of this village. The mixed-use village center would allow for commercial, residential, recreational, and civic uses, including a fire station site, and a congregate care facility. The 19-acre school and joint use area would accommodate up to 1,000 students. If the Santee School District does not acquire the property, the underlying medium density residential (MDR) land use designation may be implemented. In that case, the maximum total number of units permitted in the Specific Plan Area would increase by 59 units to a total of 3,008 units.

### *Orchard Village*

Located directly south of Fanita Commons, Orchard Village would consist of low and medium density residential housing types, neighborhood and mini-parks, and a centrally located Village Center. Orchard Village would be geographically and topographically separated from Fanita Commons by Open Space and a linear riparian area, but would be physically connected by roadways, trails, and a pedestrian bridge. This smaller, mixed-use village center would include neighborhood serving retail, office, and commercial uses. The Farm would border Orchard Village to the northeast.

### *Vineyard Village*

Vineyard Village, located in the northeastern portion of the project site, would be the largest of the three proposed villages. Vineyard Village would be separated from the other two villages by a Habitat Preserve corridor, but would be connected to the other villages by two access roads. In addition to vineyards, this village would contain multi-family and single-family residential housing types, a neighborhood-serving village center providing retail, office uses, and neighborhood and mini-parks.

### *Habitat Preserve*

More than half of the project area (approximately 60 percent or approximately 1,600 acres) would be preserved as permanent native habitat. The bulk of the preserve area, approximately 900 acres, would be located in the southern portion of the site. An approximately 35-acre trail system through the Habitat Preserve would be designed to provide public access, where appropriate. Open Space within the Habitat Preserve would be dedicated to the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan Preserve currently being prepared by the City for long-term preservation and management. A Habitat Management Plan (HMP) would be adopted for the Habitat Preserve to direct the long-term management of biological resources and meet the requirements of the Subarea Plan.

### *The Farm*

The Farm would be the community focal point of Fanita Ranch. The approximately 27-acre Farm would be located along the eastern border of Fanita Commons and Orchard Villages, near the center of the proposed development. The Farm would include an iconic event barn that would set the architectural theme of the community and provide a venue for special events and farming operations. The working Farm would also include terraced vegetable fields, pasture lands, limited housing for employees, raised gardens, and limited animal keeping. A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, where the consumer receives produce from the Farm on a regular basis, would also be proposed. Food grown on the Farm may also be distributed to local schools, restaurants, and other institutional facilities such as the congregate care and assisted living facilities.

### *Open Space*

Outside of the Habitat Preserve, the Fanita Ranch project would contain approximately 228 acres of Open Space maintained and managed by the Homeowners Association. This would include brush management areas at the edge of the development, slopes adjacent to roads and within villages, detention basins, trailheads, and two riparian areas in Fanita Commons.

### *Special Use Area*

An approximately 33-acre Special Use Area would be designated in the southerly portion of the project site. This site currently has restricted development potential due to geotechnical conditions. Potential uses could include a solar farm, recreational vehicle (RV) and boat storage, above ground agriculture, such as greenhouses, or other similar uses. The Special Use Area would take access off Carlton Hills Boulevard.

### *On-Site Mobility*

The onsite roadway network for Fanita Ranch would be designed as a system of complete streets that support motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. On-site streets would generally be two lanes and would include a variety of design elements including roundabouts, split streets, landscaped medians, and parkways. Roadways that pass through Open Space would be designed to minimize impacts to habitat and encourage safe wildlife crossings. Alternative modes of transportation would be encouraged by providing on-street bike lanes, off-street multi-purpose trails, bike stations, and shuttle stops. The pedestrian circulation system would include interconnected sidewalks, perimeter trails, nature trails, and pedestrian bridges. Figure 4 depicts the proposed Circulation Plan.

A Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan would be prepared and implemented to support alternative transportation modes, manage shared facilities to optimize modes, implement and support appropriate advanced technologies, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### *Off-Site Improvements*

The project would improve and construct new segments of three Mobility Element roads. Both Fanita Parkway and Cuyamaca Street would be improved from Mast Boulevard to their current northern limits. The extension of Fanita Parkway would be constructed north of Ganley Road, and the extension of Cuyamaca Street would be constructed north of Chaparral Drive. The project would also construct the extension of Magnolia Avenue from its current northerly terminus west to intersect with the extended Cuyamaca Street.

### *Parks, Trails and Recreational Facilities/Regional Connectivity*

The Fanita Ranch project would provide a coordinated system of parks and non-motorized use trails that would connect to the three villages, regional trails, and open space. The trail system would connect to existing offsite trails in Sycamore Canyon Open Space Preserve, Goodan Ranch Regional Park, Mission Trails Regional Park, and Santee Lakes Recreation Preserve. Approximately 73 acres of parks would be provided throughout the project site. The Community Park in Fanita Commons would provide the main location for active recreational activities within Fanita Ranch. Neighborhood parks would be provided in key locations to define neighborhoods and provide gathering spaces. Mini-parks and linear parks would be distributed throughout the community to provide opportunities for recreation, activity, and relaxation within walking distance of all homes. Many of the mini-parks would serve as trailheads to the primitive trail system within Fanita Ranch. A series of trails and paths would connect the Farm to all of the villages within Fanita Ranch (see Figure 5, Parks and Trails Plan).

Fanita Ranch would provide a system of on-street and off-street trail facilities totaling approximately 35 miles that would accommodate and promote bicycle and pedestrian use as an alternative mode of transportation or for recreational purposes. Multi-purpose trails for walking, biking, and jogging would be provided adjacent to roadways but physically separated from motor vehicle traffic by a landscaped buffer. Village access trails would be concrete-paved paths that connect village urban centers to the community-wide trail system for transportation and recreational uses. Perimeter trails would be eight-foot wide native earth trails that loop around Vineyard Village and would be intended for recreational use. Village nature trails would connect Vineyard Village to Fanita Commons and the Farm. Native trails would be unpaved pathways that provide access from developed areas to existing primitive trails within the Habitat Preserve. The primitive trail system has been planned to accommodate recreational opportunities as well as to restore areas of native habitat.

#### *Grading and Utilities*

There would be approximately 27,000,000 cubic yards of cut and fill, which would be balanced onsite. The site would be graded into development pads using a maximum 2:1 slope ratio for fill slopes and a maximum 1.5:1 for cut slopes. Significant cut and fill slopes, when visible from the public rights-of-way, would utilize landform grading techniques where the proposed contours mimic natural contours to complement the natural surroundings. Blasting may be required in some geologic formations. Proposed development within the project site contemplates the use and reuse of onsite rock materials such as large boulders, rock cobble, decomposed granite, and processed rock. Aggregate plants used for rock crushing and production of aggregate materials would be located onsite during construction. Utilization of these onsite materials would eliminate the need for importing rough or finished materials thus reducing construction-related vehicle emissions in support of the Sustainable Santee Plan currently being prepared.

Stormwater would be collected using low impact development (LID) techniques and best management practices to treat stormwater near the source and ensure that runoff is clean prior to discharging into the natural watershed. The system would collect stormwater through a series of swales, catch basins, and culverts that direct storm water to water quality basins. This system would allow natural infiltration, evapotranspiration, and filtering of the stormwater to remove microscopic organisms, suspended solids, organic material, nitrogen, and phosphorous.

PDMWD would provide domestic water service through their Advanced Water Purification Program. The proposed water system would include two new storage reservoirs, and three pump stations. PDMWD may provide recycled water to Fanita Ranch for construction purposes on a limited and seasonal basis.

PDMWD would also provide sewer services for Fanita Ranch. A new gravity sewer system, consisting of 8-inch to 12-inch pipes, is proposed on-site to collect and convey wastewater to a 15-inch trunk sewer at the west edge of Orchard Village. Wastewater would then be conveyed to an influent lift station that would pump flow to the Padre Dam Water Recycling Facility.

San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDGE) provides electricity and natural gas for San Diego County including Santee. These utilities would be extended into the project site from existing local distribution systems in the region.

#### *Public Services*

Fire protection services would be provided by the City of Santee Fire Department. The proposed project would designate a 1.5-acre site for a new City Fire Station which would be located in Fanita Commons. A Fire Protection Plan would be prepared to establish fire protection through a system of fire safety

features and design measures that have proven to perform well in wildland urban interface and high fire hazard severity zones. The system of fire protection would include redundant layering so that no single feature is relied upon for protection. An Evacuation Plan would also be prepared that focuses on resident awareness and preparedness and provides an evacuation route map along with various family evacuation preparation tools. In order to ensure fire safety during construction, a Construction Fire Prevention Plan would be prepared to provide basic direction for fire safety awareness during construction. The Construction Fire Prevention Plan would present standard protocols and approaches for reducing the potential of ignitions for typical construction site activities. These plans would be put in place to provide a multi-layer approach incorporating a variety of techniques including ignition-resistant materials, interior sprinklers, vegetation buffers, and multiple ingress/egress points for emergency traffic.

Police protection would be provided through the San Diego County Sheriff's Department through an existing contract with the City. The Village Center land use designation permits a law enforcement substation within Fanita Commons should it be desired.

Commercial and residential trash hauling, as well as industrial solid waste and recycling collection and disposal services would be provided by Waste Management, Inc. under a contractual franchise agreement with the City. The waste would be hauled to Sycamore Landfill, a 349-acre site located to the southwest of the project site off Mast Boulevard.

The 19-acre school site and adjoining joint use area in Fanita Commons is discussed above. The site is intended to accommodate a K-8 school for up to 1,000 students. High school students living in Fanita Ranch are anticipated to attend existing Santee schools in the Grossmont Union High School District.

Library services would be provided by the Santee Branch Library of San Diego County located on Carlton Hills Boulevard approximately one mile south of the project site.

#### *Development Phasing*

Construction is anticipated to occur in four phases over a 10 to 15 year period. Phases may overlap or vary depending upon market conditions and may be broken down into smaller sub-phases. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2021. The Special Use Area is not tied to the development phasing and may be developed anytime during project build-out.

**Discretionary Actions Required:** The following City discretionary actions are associated with the project and would be required for project approval:

- General Plan Amendment
- Zone Reclassification
- Specific Plan
- Development Agreement
- Environmental Impact Report Certification
- Tentative Subdivision Map(s)
- Grading Permit
- Development Review Permit(s)
- Conditional Use Permit
- Encroachment Permit(s)
- Vacations, as needed

Additionally, implementation of the project may require the applicant to obtain approval, permits, licenses, certifications, or other entitlements from various federal, state, and local agencies including but not limited to:

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers: Section 404 – Clean Water Act
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: Endangered Species Act – Section 7 Consultation or Section 10(a) Incidental Take Permit
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife: Fish and Game Code Section 1600 – Streambed Alteration Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding
- California State Water Resources Control Board: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit; General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit, including Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
- San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board: Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

**Preliminary Environmental Review:** The following environmental topics would be evaluated in detail in the Draft Revised EIR, and mitigation measures would be identified as necessary to reduce potentially significant effects.

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| • Aesthetics                                    | • Land Use and Planning         |
| • Agriculture and Forestry Resources            | • Mineral Resources             |
| • Air Quality                                   | • Noise                         |
| • Biological Resources                          | • Population and Housing        |
| • Cultural Resources                            | • Public Services               |
| • Energy  | • Recreation                    |
| • Geology, Soils, and Paleontological Resources | • Transportation                |
| • Greenhouse Gas Emissions                      | • Tribal Cultural Resources     |
| • Hazards and Hazardous Materials               | • Utilities and Service Systems |
| • Hydrology and Water Quality                   | • Wildfire                      |

The following comprehensive technical studies and supporting documents would be prepared and included as appendices to the EIR:

- General Plan Compatibility Analysis
- Aggregate Crushing and Reuse Plan
- Air Quality Technical Report
- Biological Resources Technical Report
- Potential Critical Course Sediment Yield Area Analysis
- Cultural Resources Studies (Confidential - will not be appended to the EIR)
- Energy Analysis
- Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan
- Fire Protection Plan including Construction Fire Protection Plan
- Geotechnical Investigations
- Green Streets Priority Development Project Exempt Stormwater Quality Management Plan
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Report
- Noise Technical Report
- Paleontological Resources Report

- Parking Management Plan
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Priority Development Project Stormwater Quality Management Plan
- Preliminary Drainage Study
- Sewer Service Study
- Stormwater Infiltration Feasibility Study
- Traffic Impact Analysis
- Transportation Demand Management Plan
- Water Service Study
- Water Supply Assessment Report

For questions regarding this notice, please contact me at (858) 258-4100 ext. 182.

  
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John O'Donnell  
Principal Planner

11/5/2018  
Date



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Source: ESRI 2018



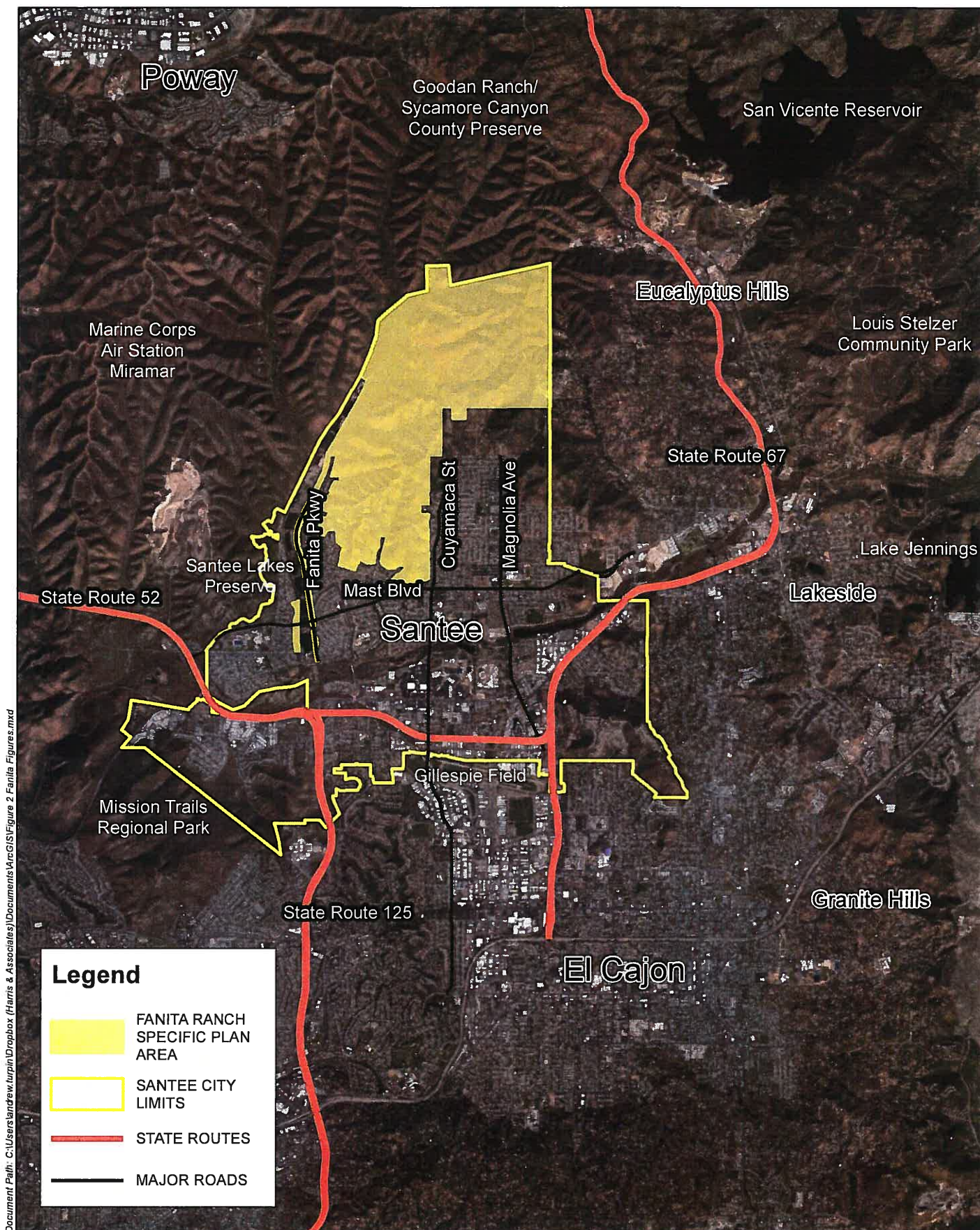
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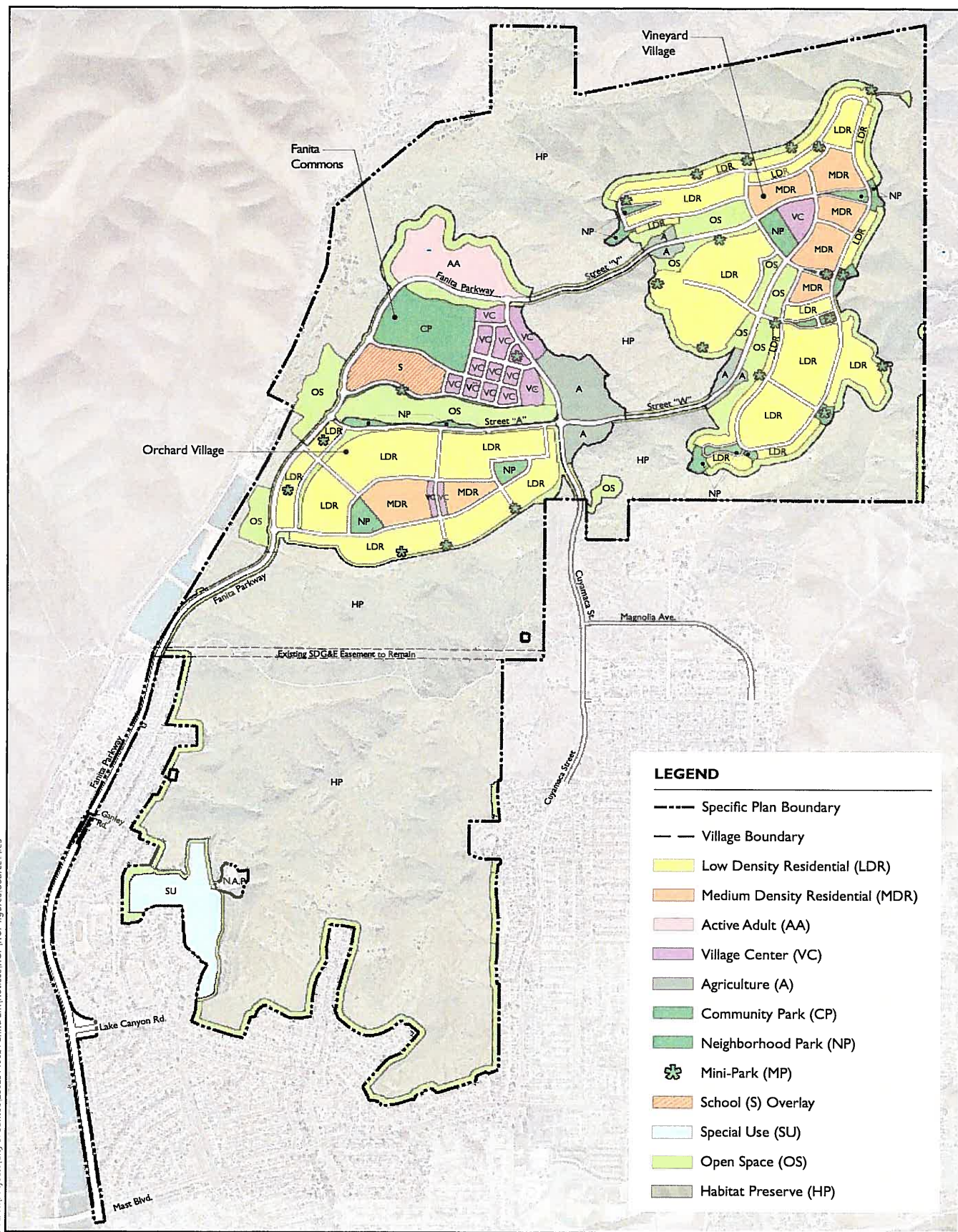
**Figure 1**  
Regional Location Map





Source: ESRI 2018



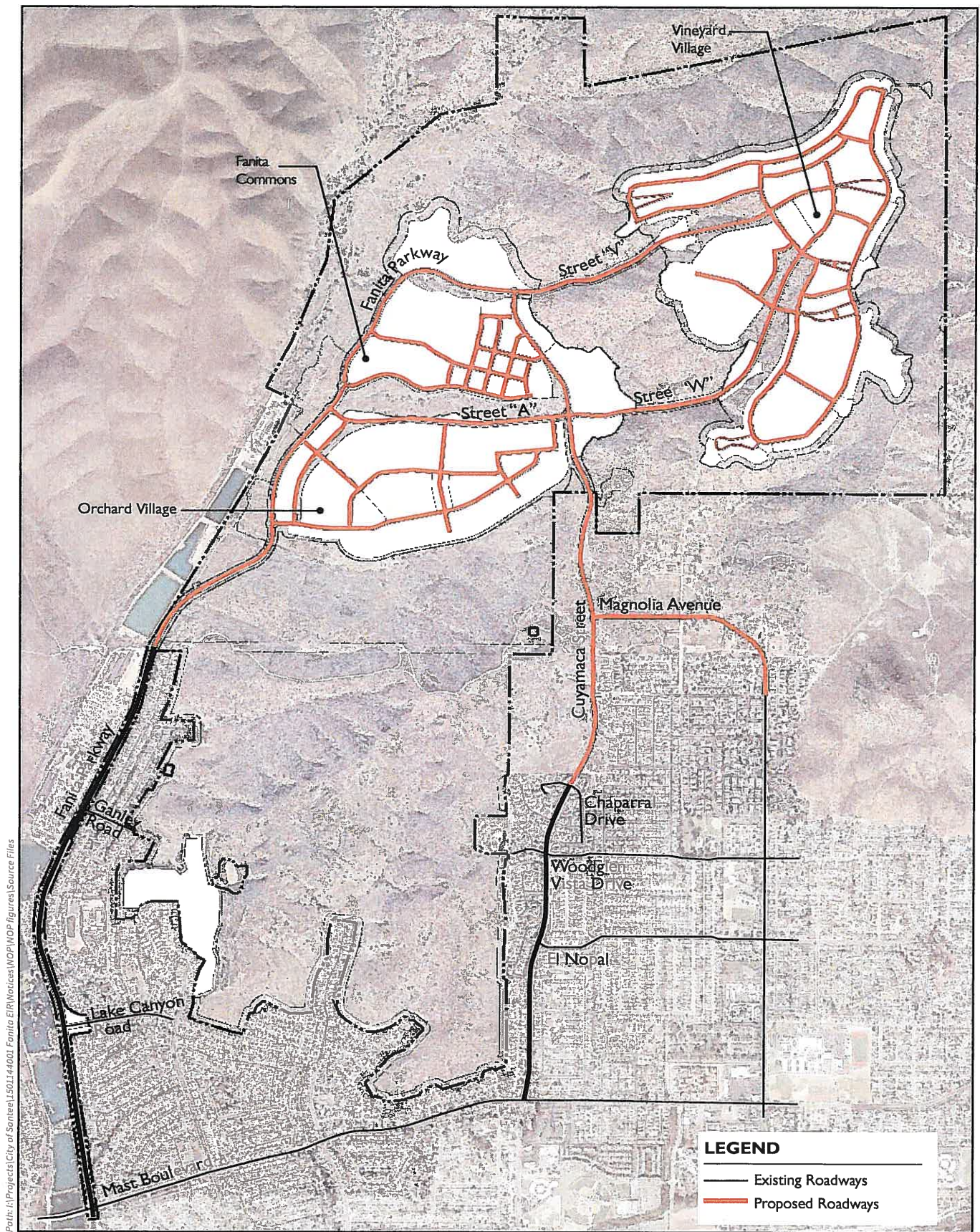


Source: KTGy Planning + Architecture



### Figure 3 Land Use Plan





Source: KTG Planning + Architecture



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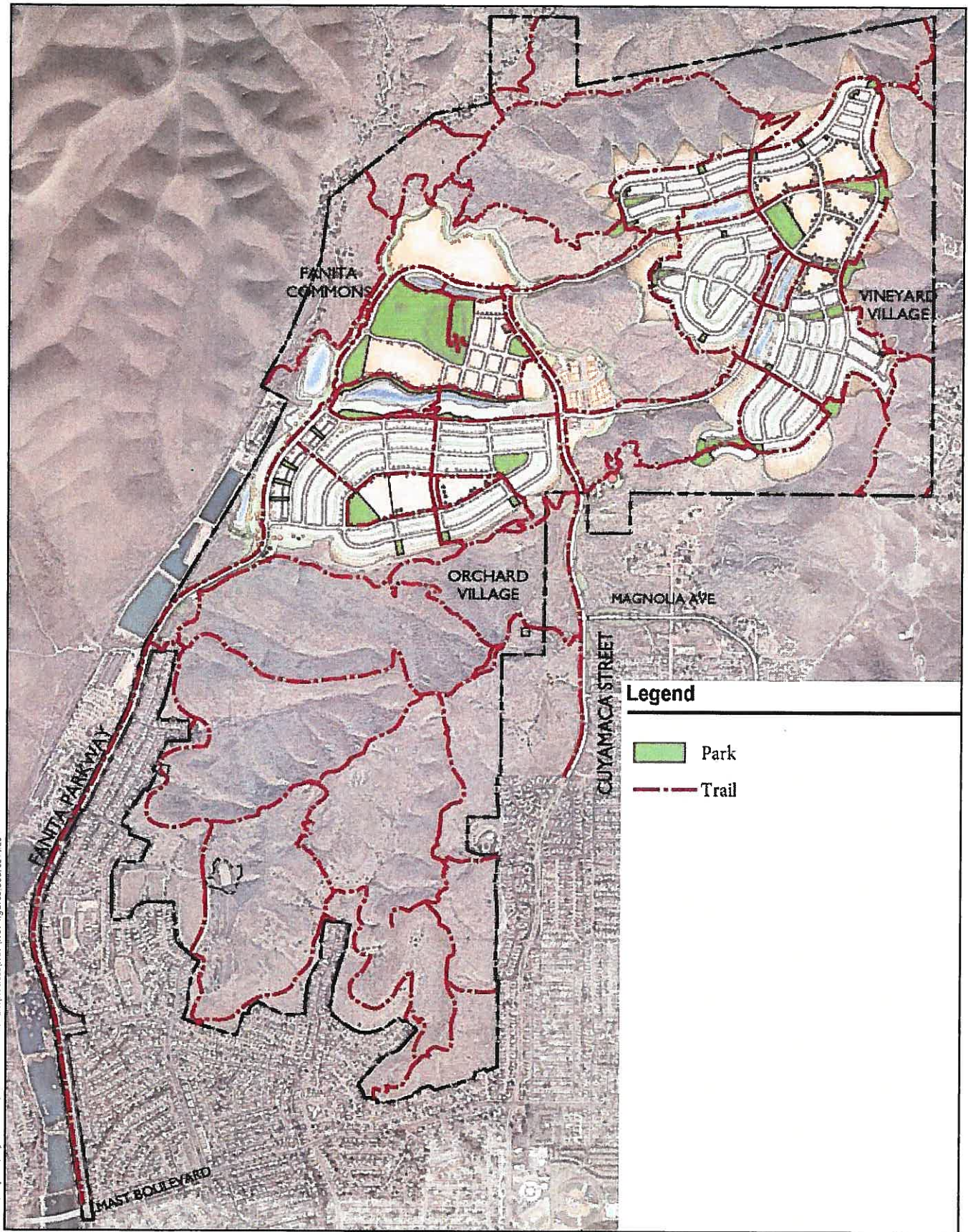
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**Figure 4**  
Circulation Plan



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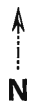


Source: KTG Planning + Architecture



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**Figure 5**  
Parks and Trails Plan